



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Elk Hunting

## *Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge*

### Special Elk Hunt

You have been selected to participate in the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge special elk hunt. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Refuge) and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) work in cooperation to provide these hunts.

The special elk hunt at Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge is a management tool to maintain the elk population at a level compatible with good habitat conditions. A minimum objective level of 380 elk has been set based on the amount of annual forage available for grazing and browsing animals including elk, white-tailed deer, Texas longhorn cattle, and American bison.

A Refuge management objective is to maintain the elk population as it would naturally occur. This means the sex ratio of bulls to cows is maintained at close to one-to-one rather than maximizing cow numbers to increase the population.

The number of permits issued annually for bulls and cows varies depending upon animal production, herd sex ratio and the success of previous hunts in removing excess animals. This is a once in a lifetime hunt, and, once drawn, hunters may not reapply for this hunt.

Elk are large animals, weighing between 400 and 800 pounds, and they are quite difficult to pack out of the rough terrain encountered on the Refuge. Hunters are allowed and strongly advised to bring at least one non-hunting companion to help pack out elk taken.

### Organization and Operation of the Hunt

Hunter registration and orientation are held at the Refuge Visitor Center, located 6 miles north of Cache, OK, at the intersection of Highway 115 and Highway 49.

Refuge staff will divide hunters into groups prior to registration. A Group Leader (Refuge or ODWC employee) will be assigned to each group. The Group Leader will provide transportation to and from the field, determine drop-off and pick-up points and times in cooperation with hunters, and make on the ground decisions required for the safety of hunters, other visitors, and government property.

Group Leaders will not assist in the actual location or harvest of elk or with field dressing or packing carcasses to a road. Tips and gifts from hunters cannot be accepted by Group Leaders.

Hunters may work together in their area to increase their chance of taking an animal; however, each hunter must shoot their own animal.

Transportation will be provided to and from the field in the back of government pick-up trucks. Under these conditions, early morning weather can be bitterly cold. Warm clothing is a must. Personal vehicles will not be used in the hunt or retrieval operation. Government vehicles will be confined to established roads and Group Leaders will not drive "cross country" except in emergencies. Horses or ATV's are not allowed for hunting or packing.

Non-hunting companions may not accompany the hunter into the field or assist in any way until an elk has been taken and reported to the hunter's Group Leader. Once notified, the Group Leader will transport the helpers to the hunter to assist with packing out the elk. A sturdy packboard or packframe is recommended for hunters and helpers alike. They are worth their weight in gold when packing out an elk.

### Regulations

You must hold a valid Oklahoma hunting or combination license (or proof of exemption).

You must be at least 18 years of age by the date of your hunt.

Only the persons whose names were drawn for the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge Special Elk Hunt are eligible to hunt. The permits are not transferable to another.

To ensure the safety, quality and fairness of the hunt, the hunt areas are closed to public use during the hunt period. At no time are visitors allowed in the hunt area. This includes non-hunting companions, family, and/or friends.

You must attend a hunter orientation, registration, and safety training and briefing session on Monday before the two

and one-half day hunt. Failure to attend the briefing will result in loss of hunting privileges. The elk hunt notification letter will be required for registration.

Hunters should bring a lunch to the briefing as well as warm clothing and raingear for the tour of the hunt areas following the briefing. Due to limited seating in the hunt vehicles, only hunters will be allowed to tour the hunt areas.

Center-fire rifles of .270 caliber or larger with soft nose bullets are the legal firearms and ammunition for this hunt. All bullets designed for hunting are allowed. Specifically prohibited are full metal jacket bullets. Rifles should be sighted in before your arrival at the Refuge. No other firearms of any type, including those carried by off-duty police officers, are allowed on the Refuge.

Each hunter will be limited to five (5) cartridges per day. The cartridge limit is imposed on the hunter to curtail crippling loss and to encourage good marksmanship, thereby adding quality to the hunt.

For safety reasons, the Refuge requires the action of all firearms to be kept open and the magazine unloaded at all times except when in the field hunting.

The possession or use of alcoholic beverages, including beer, and other mind altering substances is prohibited within the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Group Leaders are required to deny entry into the hunt area to persons using or possessing alcoholic beverages or other mind altering substances.

Hunters are required to wear a fluorescent orange vest and hat, a total of 500 square inches of color, as required by State law for hunting big game with firearms. Person assisting the hunter in retrieving or packing out their elk must also wear this type of vest.

### Required safety equipment

Each hunter is required to possess the following equipment while hunting:

- Compass
- Flashlight with fresh batteries
- Pocket first-aid kit

- Rain gear and warm clothing
- Matches (fires restricted to hunters lost at night or disabled by injury)
- Police whistle

### Legal Game and Bag Limit

One (1) elk, antlered (bull) or antlerless (cow), as specified on your permit. A legal antlered elk is an elk with at least six (6) inch antler length above the natural hairline, on either side. Thus, a spike bull with at least one antler six (6) inches in length will be legal on a bull permit, but will be illegal on the antlerless permit. No animal other than an elk as specified on your permit may be taken.

All elk must be checked through the Refuge check station and a metal transportation seal attached to legalize carcass removal from the Refuge. The collection of biological data, if requested by the Refuge, is mandatory and a condition of the hunt. Lower jaws may be examined and possibly removed at the check station to permit ageing. The suitability of trophy heads for mounting will not be affected by this procedure.

### Additional Information

For their own safety, hunters should be in good physical condition to participate in this hunt. The mountainous terrain of the Refuge is boulder-strewn with rock outcroppings and can be difficult to navigate. Non-ambulatory hunters should notify the Refuge of their needs prior to the hunt.

Should the Refuge experience a wildfire during the hunt, all hunting will cease. Hunters are asked to use caution when smoking. Smoking may not be allowed if high fire danger conditions exist on the Refuge.

The rugged terrain of the Wichitas may cause sportsmen to lose their sense of direction, especially after dark or on overcast days. If a hunter fails to come in by nightfall, the roads will be patrolled throughout the night. A full search will begin at the first light of day. All hunters must be prepared to spend the night as well as the day in open country.

Hunters may camp on the Refuge during the period of their hunt at Camp Doris. Camping fees are \$8.00 per night for sites without electricity and \$16.00 per night for sites with electricity.

Showers may not be available at the campground this time of year. All regulations applicable to the users of the Refuge will apply when camping

except that unloaded firearms used in the hunt may be retained in camp with all ammunition locked in a separate compartment. Firearms must remain unloaded at all times when in camp. Dogs must be on a leash at all times within the Refuge and may not be taken on the hunt.

Numerous motels are available in Lawton, which is about 25 miles from the Refuge headquarters and check station. Some lodging is available in Medicine Park, adjacent to the Refuge on the east. Restaurants are available in Cache, Medicine Park and Meers, which are 10 to 15 miles.

The following Field Dressing Equipment is recommended:

- Sturdy packboard
- Small hatchet or saw
- Material for wrapping meat
- Cord or rope
- Sharp knife and whetstone

### Hunt Schedule

#### *Hunt Numbers 103 and 104*

Monday December 7, 2008 through Thursday, December 10, 2009 - All activities at the Wichita Mountains Visitor Center

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Hunter Registration

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Hunter Orientation/Hunter Safety

12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Lunch

12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tour of Hunt Area

Tuesday, December 8, 2009 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Wednesday, December 9, 2009 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Thursday, December 10, 2009 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 12:00 noon

#### *Hunt Numbers 105 and 106*

Monday December 14, 2009 through Thursday, December 17, 2009 - All activities at the Wichita Mountains Visitor Center

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Hunter Registration

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Hunter Orientation/Hunter Safety

12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Lunch

12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tour of Hunt Area

Tuesday, December 15, 2009 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Wednesday, December 16, 2009 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Thursday, December 17, 2009 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 12:00 noon

#### *Hunt Numbers 107 and 108*

Monday January 11, 2010 through

Thursday, January 14, 2010 - All activities at the Wichita Mountains Visitor Center

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Hunter Registration

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Hunter Orientation/Hunter Safety

12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Lunch

12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tour of Hunt Area

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

Thursday, January 14, 2010 - Check Station 5:30 a.m. - 6:00 a.m.

Meet at Check Station

Hunt: 1/2 hour before sunrise to 12:00 noon

### For additional information

Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge  
32 Refuge Headquarters  
Indianapolis, OK 73552  
580/429-3222  
580/429-9323 FAX  
<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/wichitamountains>

**July 2009**